

Message Text

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15

ORIGIN NEA-09

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APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER

TREASURY:TROSEN (INFO)

COMMERCE:PHALE (INFO)

DOD/ISA:ESCHAEFER (INFO)

AGRICULTURE:CDOKE (INFO)

EXIM:CHAMMOND (INFO)

USIA/INE:WRUGH (INFO)

AID/ASIA:LOESCHSLI (INFO)

EUR/EX:ARATTRAY

NA/EX:JSCONNOLL

NEA/ARP:FMDICKMAN

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R 212002Z MAR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL EUROPEAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS

ALL NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA, SA

SUBJECT:VISITORS TO SAUDI ARABIA

1. THE INCREASING NUMBER OF PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL VISITORS TO SAUDI ARABIA ARE STRAINING THE LIMITED RESOURCES OF EMBASSY JIDDA. ITS TASK IS MADE ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT BECAUSE THE CAPITAL IS IN RIYADH BUT THE EMBASSY AND ALL OTHER FOREIGN EMBASSIES ARE LOCATED IN JIDDA, 500 MILES AWAY. THE LACK OF ADEQUATE COMMUNICATIONS, LIMITED TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES, HOTEL SHORTAGES, AND THE FACT THAT

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AIRLINES AND HOTEL REGULARLY OVERBOOK, REQUIRE CAREFUL PRE-

PLANNING OF TRAVEL IN THIS AREA. THESE CONDITIONS HAVE OFTEN MADE THE EMBASSY OR CONSULATE GENERAL IN DHAHRAN A REFUGE FOR AMERICAN VISITORS EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES.

2. ALTHOUGH OUR POSTS IN SAUDI ARABIA WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN AND WHATEVER ASSISTANCE POSSIBLE WITHIN THEIR LIMITED RESOURCES TO OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE TRAVELERS, ADDRESSEE POSTS SHOULD PUBLICIZE THE FACT THAT: (A) OUR POSTS IN SAUDI ARABIA ARE NO LONGER IN A POSITION TO MEET PERSONS AND ASSIST WITH CUSTOMS FORMALITIES AT THE AIRPORT UNLESS PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED TO THE TRAVELER. NORMALLY, TRANSPORTATION WILL BE PROVIDED ONLY FOR OFFICIAL VISITORS WITH RANK OF

DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OR EQUIVALENT AND HIGHER, CODELS, VIPS, AND PARTIES OF COMPARABLE STANDING. (B) PERSONS OTHER THAN THOSE SPECIFIED ABOVE MAY OBTAIN TAXIS AT THE AIRPORT AND PROCEED TO THEIR HOTEL. TAXIS SHOULD ALSO BE USED FROM HOTEL TO OTHER LOCATIONS. (C) SIMILAR PROCEDURES APPLY TO PERSONS LEAVING JIDDA OR DHAHRAN. (D) THE EMBASSY AND CONSULATE GENERAL WILL NO LONGER MAKE HOTEL RESERVATIONS UNLESS A DEPOSIT ACCOMPANIES THE REQUEST. IF THE REQUEST IS MADE TELEGRAPHICALLY, IT MUST ALSO STATE THE TRAVELER WILL REIMBURSE THE POSTS FOR THE COST OF ANY HOTEL ROOM CANCELLATION CAUSED BY LATE ARRIVAL. THIS IS NECESSARY SINCE OUR POSTS ARE BILLED FOR ROOMS THAT ARE RESERVED BUT NOT OCCUPIED WITHIN SIX HOURS OF EXPECTED ARRIVAL OF THE TRAVELER AT THE HOTEL. REQUESTS FOR RESERVATIONS SHOULD BE MADE AT LEAST THREE WEEKS IN ADVANCE. OTHERWISE, HOTELS ARE LIKELY TO BE FULL.

3. ADDRESSEES ARE REMINDED THAT THE IMPORTATION OF ALCOHOL, SLEEPING PILLS, PEP PILLS OF ALL TYPES, HASHISH AND OTHER DRUGS IS STRENUOUSLY PROHIBITED. THERE HAVE BEEN RECENT INSTANCES OF PERSONS ARRIVING AT THE AIRPORT WITH A BOTTLE OF OPENED OR UNOPENED LIQUOR WHICH HAVE CAUSED CONSIDERABLE EMBARRASSMENT TO THE POST AND TO THE INDIVIDUALS CONCERNED. PERSONS FOUND WITH LIQUOR IN THEIR LUGGAGE MAY FACE IMPRISONMENT OR IMMEDIATE EX-
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PULSION FROM THE KINGDOM ON FIRST AVAILABLE AIRCRAFT.

4. IN THE CASE OF HASHISH AND HARDER DRUGS, THE PENALTY IS AN UNALTERABLE 15 YEAR SENTENCE FOR TRAFFICKING, 5 YEARS FOR POSSESSION, AND 2 YEARS FOR USE. INGERSOLL

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